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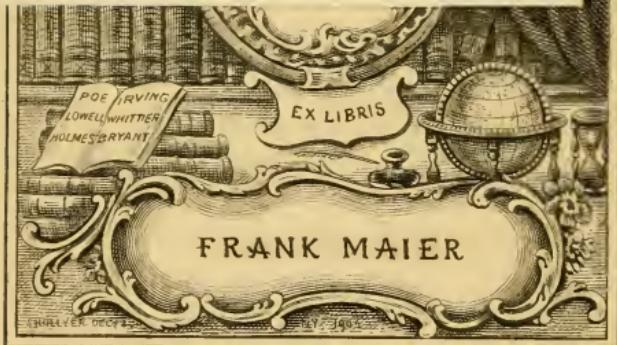


GEORGE EDWARD RICE



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# NUGAMENTA;

A BOOK OF VERSES

BY

GEORGE EDWARD RICE.

“ Nos tristia vitae  
Solamur cantu.”              STATIUS.

“ I left no calling for this idle trade,  
No duty broke.”              POPE.

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TO THE MEMORY OF ONE WHOSE GENTLE EYES WILL  
NEVER REST UPON THESE PRINTED PAGES, THEY ARE IN-  
SCRIBED, THOUGH ALL UNWORTHY OF THE HONOR, WITH  
SENTIMENTS OF AFFECTION AND REGRET THAT LANGUAGE  
CANNOT INDICATE NOR TIME DESTROY.







## PREFACE.

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THIS Book contains a few pieces of occasional Verse, which, without pretension to Poetry, the writer trusts may beguile some weary moments for the uncritical reader.

April, 1860.

16 COURT STREET, BOSTON.







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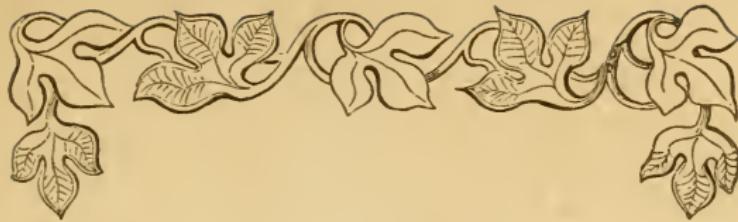
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## VERSES.



### THE PROPHECY.

#### PART I.

If you would hear me speak of one who dwelt  
In that fair land of Poland, years agone,  
And of his fate, so mournful,— and would hear  
Also of one whose love and grief for him  
Raised her from Earth to Heaven — Listen !

There are such things, however worldlings sneer,  
As love for all mankind, and sympathy  
With every suffering of humanity,—  
As loftiness of purpose in a life,—  
As moral grandeur in a death, that crowns  
A peerless life with an immortal fame,—  
As Woman's love, through sorrow and distress,—  
As trust unfaltering, and as broken hearts.

The moon was flooding with her gentle light  
The green and dewy meadow, and she made

The night so calm and lovely, lovelier still ;  
The stars, o'erpowered by her brighter beams,  
Scarce ventured forth, save here and there a few  
That faintly glimmered in the Orient.

Nature seemed tranquil,— not a breeze swept by  
To bid the lily rear its coronal,  
Or waft its perfume from the violet ;  
And save the murmuring of the rivulet,  
That, creeping sluggishly along, illumined  
By calm Diana's rays, seemed molten silver,  
The silence was unbroken ; till a sound,  
That seemed the measured tread of warlike men,  
Came from a wooded and far-distant hill ;  
Nearer it came, and nearer ; now the moon  
Gleamed on the bayonets, and touched their points  
With her pure argent light, and now they came  
With slow and steady step across the plain  
Straight to the river's margin. All were armed  
Save one, who trod the proudest and most firm,  
Though he alone of all had nothing more  
To hope on earth,— for he had come to die.  
His crime was this : He dared to stand alone  
The champion of the Suffering and the Poor ;  
He thought that human laws might yet be framed  
More equal for the Lowly and the Great ;  
And that God made this fair and beauteous Earth  
So beautiful, for all men to enjoy  
And walk erect thereon in majesty.

They called it Treason, when he spake these thoughts,  
And led him forth upon the plain to die,—  
To die at night,—this calm and lovely night,—  
Because beneath God's glorious eye,—the Sun,—  
They dared not kill the man the people loved.

Erect and unappalled he stood ; his eye,  
Bright with the light of genius and of truth,  
Undimmed, could face Death's cruel messengers.  
Godlike he seemed in beauty and in mien ;  
Young, valiant, noble, and yet doomed to die,—  
His purpose unaccomplished, and his great  
And lofty destiny yet unfulfilled.  
He looked upon the sky, the moon, the stars,  
The river and the meadow he must leave  
In one brief moment ; and he thought of Him  
Who made them all so grand and beautiful,  
And breathed a prayer that he might find at last  
Rest in His kingdom ; then he thought of her —  
The flower he had worn upon his heart  
In all its bloom, its fragrance, and its beauty —  
Whose calm sweet smile was ever at his hearth,  
Whose life was love and gentleness and peace,  
And with her name upon his lips he gave  
The fatal signal. Oh, most worthy he,  
Living, to live in some true woman's eyes,  
And, dying, to be buried in her heart !

A quick, sharp volley, then a heavy fall,  
And all was over.

Oh, 'twas bravely done !  
Jo Triumphe ! 'twas a worthy deed !  
Now found the bugle, beat the rattling drum,  
And back to whence ye came. Go ! leave the corse,  
That held the soul that God is keeping now,  
A prey to wolves less merciless than ye.

## PART II.

Alas, how ill news speeds ! And yet she knew,  
Ere they had told her, that her Love lay dead !  
Between two great and loving hearts the bond  
Of sympathy is such, though seas divide,  
One cannot bleed alone. She shed no tear  
And made no moan, but she arose and wrapped  
Her mantle 'round her slender form and fled  
Straight to the bloodstained sod, — for Love inspired,  
And they whom Love inspires can ne'er be wrong.  
The moon, that hid her face behind a cloud  
And would not see him die, shone forth to light her.  
Onward she came with swift unsteady gait,  
Springing, then faltering, like a wounded deer ; —  
Right on she sped to his pale corse, direct  
As steel flies to the magnet. When she saw  
The outline of his figure, where he lay

As graceful and as beautiful in death  
As e'er in life, there rose one piercing shriek,  
Wild and unearthly, that might rend the sky ;  
Yet on she came. O God ! what human power  
Could keep these hearts apart ! Ah ! never yet  
Had Love a truer votary than she.  
She reached the spot and knelt, — she could not  
weep, —

Her eyes seemed balls of fire, and her heart,  
Throbbing convulsively with painful sobs  
All unrelieved by tears, was breaking now.  
She wound her arms around his form, and spake  
To him who ne'er before refused to listen : —  
“ Kind friend, fond lover, gentle husband, speak !  
It is your Wenda calls. How oft you've said,  
When sitting side by side some summer's eve,  
Your arm around me, that if you were dead  
My kiss would rouse you. There, my sweet Love,  
there !

I press my lips so cold to yours still colder ;  
My arms are 'round you ; are you dead, quite dead ?  
Is the heart stilled whereon my head hath lain  
So calm and sweetly tranquil, all unmoved  
Save by its throbs that syllabled my name ?  
My Love, my Life, my Lord, will you not speak ?  
My bosom ever thrilled at your dear voice  
Like harpstring to the minstrel's touch. Oh, speak !  
My inmost thoughts were yours, and every wish

Of my fond heart, and all my Fancy's dreams ;  
You were my first, my last, and only Love,  
And all my spirit was by yours controlled.  
And are you dead, my own sweet Love, quite dead ?  
So good, so noble, generous, and brave !  
You will not speak. I seem of sense bereft —  
My brain is reeling. Hark ! I hear a voice  
Not yours, my Love. It is the cry of Blood !  
For blood unjustly shed, blood still must answer.”

Then rose she from his side, and standing forth  
Towered a Pythonesse in majesty.  
She turned her face towards Warsaw, and she raised  
Trembling aloft one small and sculptured hand  
As white as alabaster, save a spot  
Made crimson by a gallant heart’s best blood,  
And thus she spake : —

“ Woe to the Capital !

To the Kingdom, woe ! I feel the spirit  
Of prophecy is on me. Woe to Poland !  
A century shall pass, then there shall be  
The Russian in your homes. I hear the shriek  
Of dying victims, and I see the light  
Of blazing roofs. Woe to fair Poland, woe !  
This noble blood shall be avenged in time.”

Then fell she on the corse, and there she lay,  
Her breaking heart against his broken one,  
Murmuring so gently, — “ Let me die with him

I loved so much ! O Father, let me die ! ”  
And God was merciful and heard her prayer.

A century has passed, and that fair land  
Is known no more 'mid nations of the world.  
The Russian at their hearths and in their halls  
Now reigns supreme, yet Nature is the same ;  
The meadow still is fair, the moon beams bright,  
The rivulet creeps by, and nought seems changed,  
Unless, perchance, one bank of violets  
Is of a brighter and a lovelier hue  
And yields a sweeter perfume, for it grows  
Above two noble hearts, and there for aye  
The moon shall beam, the rivulet creep by.





## FANTASIA.

WHEN I, in melancholy mood,  
By real or by fancied griefs opprest,  
Sigh but for peace and long to be at rest,  
I find it good  
Alone to wander  
Far from the crowded mart and walks of trade,  
Where foot of man hath seldom trod,  
And there in solitude and silence ponder  
On all the works of a most bounteous God.  
I seek sometimes the Forest shade ;  
To the sad music of the Pines I listen,  
And watch the wild wood flowers,  
With hues made brighter by the grateful showers,  
Wave in the wind and in the sunlight glisten ;  
Or by the margin of the boundless sea,  
The shore my couch, the Heaven my canopy,  
Reclining on the sand I lie  
To hearken to the ripple's mournful tune,  
Or by the silvery radiance of the moon  
To mark the gorgeous pomp and splendors of the  
sky.

While straying thus one day  
From all the haunts of men  
Far, very far away,  
To greet the breezes from across the sea,  
I came upon a small and lovely glen  
Where grew the Jasmine and the Violet,  
The spicy Pink, the fragrant Mignonette,  
And sweet Anemone ;  
And in that lonely spot,  
With Woodbine covered o'er,  
Stood a sequestered cot.

Wearied and faint, and tired of meditation,  
I hailed with joy this human habitation,  
And at the cottage door  
I saw a man with flowing silvery hair  
Who beckoned me to come, and placed a chair  
And asked me to partake his simple fare.

Refreshed with food and wine,  
I thanked this host of mine ;  
And when I rose, my footsteps to retrace,  
Sadly the old man sighed,  
And the big tears came streaming down his face.  
“ You’ve been by sorrow tried,—  
Tell me your tale,” I cried,  
“ Why by this desolate shore,  
Hearing the wind’s sad moan

And the deep ocean's roar,  
You dwell remote, untended, and alone.”

Sadly he gazed on the glorious sea,  
And this was the tale as he told it to me : —

“ Long, long ago in years gone by,  
Ere sorrow struck me with a fatal dart,  
And Life was bright and hopes were high,  
I wooed and won the Idol of my heart.

“ In this little cot lived we,  
That gentle girl and I,  
As happy as we could be.  
Week after week flew by,  
Flew by my Love and me,  
And month came in and month passed out,  
But we heeded not what the months were about,  
So pleasantly lived we  
By the side of the sounding sea.

“ Happy beyond humanity's lot  
Were we in this desolate spot,  
For swiftly and joyously passed the time  
While we read volumes of quaint old rhyme  
Sung by the Poets whose wonderful art  
Quickens the throbs of a Nation's heart,  
And those enchanting tales of Fairy land

That erst had charmed us in our childhood's hours ;  
And then, with hand in hand,  
Or with my arm around her slender waist,  
Happy to be thus placed,  
We wandered o'er the fields and plucked the flowers.

“ Those days have flown,— I can but say ‘ Woe’s  
me ! ’

And think how blithe were we ;  
Unmindful that calamity might come ;  
That we might live and love no more  
In our small cot, beside this rocky shore,  
That made so dear a home.  
We could not fancy as the years flew by, —  
Flew by on angel’s pinions, —  
That any clouds could darken our bright sky ;  
That aught could dim the lustre of an eye  
Or cause one tearful sigh  
In Love’s dominions.

“ How oft at eve, along the rocks, we strolled  
To hear the ocean’s roar  
And watch the waves, as one by one they rolled  
Up the resounding shore !  
And as we recognized the mighty hand  
Of Him who made the sea, the sky, the land,  
We felt our souls expand,  
And loved each other more  
Than e’er we loved before.

“ So love went on increasing day by day,  
And three years passed away ;  
No happier hours were ever known than we  
Enjoyed in this small cot beside the deep blue sea.

“ One fearful night,  
When the storm was abroad in all its might,  
Reading I sat alone  
Hearing the moan  
Of the fierce tempest, and the ocean’s roar,  
And by our cottage door  
Swept the great angry waves with many a groan  
And many a dismal wail ;  
Frequent the lightning’s flash,  
Frequent the sudden crash,  
That told of some great tree laid prostrate by the gale.

“ She in the sunshine of whose smile I lived,  
In winning whom Life’s purpose seemed to end ;  
Who never, while I loved her, could have grieved,—  
My better angel and unchanging friend,—  
Had seen the heavy clouds around us lower  
And sought her chamber at the twilight hour ;  
But when the storm rose high  
And raged with violence so superhuman  
I wished to join her,— for, when danger’s nigh,  
’Tis thought a gentle woman  
Feels less inquietude and fear,  
If by her side is one to whom she’s dear,—

So I the half-read book  
Returned to its accustomed nook  
And sought the chamber where I thought there lay  
All that my God had given,—all he could take away.

“ Softly I opened the unfastened door ;  
She who remembered every sacred duty,  
In all her innocence and beauty,  
Was kneeling on the floor.  
I knew her prayer ascended,  
Meekly, sincerely,  
For him she loved so dearly,  
And, ere that prayer was ended,  
For me to enter there  
Would have profaned the air  
Made holy by her prayer.  
I could but worship her,—  
A faintlike woman who could never err,—  
So stainless and so fair.

“ When her fond prayer was said  
She raised her queenlike head  
And turned on me her gentle eyes  
With a faint smile of sweet surprise.  
Forth from the threshold of the door  
I sprang to raise her from the floor,  
But ere my extended arms  
Could clasp her graceful charms

A sudden, dazzling glare  
Lightened the murky air,  
And on the floor she lay ;  
Without a sigh or groan  
Her soul had passed away  
And I was left — alone !

“ Stilled is the heart that solely beat for me  
Three happy years beside the deep blue sea ;  
The gentle eyes are closed  
That shone so brightly when I sang their praises,  
And o'er the bosom where my head repos'd  
Grow now the violets and daisies.  
There, in her favorite dell,  
Where she oft wandered when the Morn was break-  
ing,  
She sleeps the sleep that knows no waking,  
Surrounded by the flowers she loved in life so well.

“ Long years have fled since then,  
And Time has bowed my head and blanched my hair,  
While I, remote from men,  
Have passed my days in study and in prayer.  
Here in this spot made holy by her death  
Will I yield up my breath,  
And while I live my life shall be  
Kept sacred to her memory.

'Tis good to bear the Cross,  
And if my grievous loss  
To me is sanctified,  
And I, by sore affliction tried,  
From all my earthly taints  
And sins am purified,  
In mansions of the Just,  
Beyond the sky, I trust  
To meet her with the Saints.'"

The sun had tinged the western wave with glory,  
The twilight had crept on me, and the pall  
Of Night had slowly settled over all,  
The while I listened to this tearful story ;  
Then through the air I heard a distant bell  
That pierced my soul like a funereal knell,  
And I aroused me and my footsteps bent  
Homeward in serious and thoughtful mood,  
With all my feelings chastened and subdued,  
On the philosophy of dreams intent.



## WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

“ For of all sad words of tongue or pen,  
The saddest are these, — ‘ It might have been.’ ”

WHITTIER.

### I.

WHAT lies in the shadowy Future, alas !

Never falls within a blind Mortal’s ken ;  
We cannot foresee what will come to pass,  
But we know too surely what might have been ;  
Fulfilment of hopes that our sanguine youth  
Thought simply awaited that we should be men  
And could buckle our armor on for the Truth  
Are among all the things that might have been.

### II.

Like mist in the morn fled the roseate hue

Everything wore in that cloudless day  
When hearts beat gayly, for Life was new  
And flowers seemed scattered all over our way ;  
We thought the time of our triumph so proud  
Would come and denote us victorious men,  
Now nameless we struggle amid the crowd  
And bitterly think of what might have been.

## III.

Sorrow is fruitless,— Regret is vain,—  
 Experience teaches but little to man ;  
 We should neglect our chances again,  
 Though we now know something of Nature's  
 plan ;  
 We talk of the blind undiscerning Age  
 That hailed us not as the coming men,—  
 History opened a virgin page  
 To receive our names,— did we seize the pen ?

## IV.

Ah, no ! we basked and dreamed in the sun  
 While opportunities rare went by,  
 We awoke to find that nothing was done,  
 Then sat us down in the dust to sigh ;  
 We grieve, when we are alone to blame,  
 We, the vainglorious, cowardly men,—  
 Not having conquered a wreath from Fame,  
 It is idle to prate of what might have been.

## V.

But yet to us all 'tis the solace left,  
 When disappointment has marked our way,  
 Being of hope for the Future bereft,  
 To speak of the hope of a former day ;

Not having been to our Mission true,—

And heaven ordains to the least of men  
Manifold duties that he should do,—

We love to talk of what might have been.

VI.

I might have roamed over this world so wide,

In happiness such as ne'er mortal knew,

I as your guard, and you as my guide,

In search for the Beautiful, Pure, and True ;

I might have won an undying fame,

That would live in the hearts of my fellow-men,

And have made you proud that you bore my name :

All these are things that might have been.

VII.

My youth was tinged with a golden hue,

By the fond illusion that you were mine,

That I should prove my passion was true,

By a life's devotion through storm and shine.

We might have been happy — but let that pass,

For naught betides that we hoped for then,—

You are sleeping under the waving grafts,

And I live but to think of what might have been.



## ATARAXIA.

WHEN I am all aweary of the strife,  
The turmoil and the restlessness of life,  
And can no longer bear my unquiet heart  
By cares and fears distrest,  
But need the solace and the balm of rest,  
I leave the town with all its busy hum  
And seek the country and its solitude ;  
Here to these fields I come,  
And need no Teacher with his formal art  
To prove that man is nought and God is good,—  
No voice can speak like Nature's to my heart ;—  
In every leaf and bud and flower I see  
How great His power, and feel how weak are we ;  
And as beside this violet bank I lie  
Marking the stream glide by  
With steady ceaseless flow,  
Myself I scarcely know ;  
I am no longer he who came  
In fierce despairing mood  
With all his brain aflame,  
But I am tranquil, quiet, and subdued ;

For as the stream flows onward to the sea,  
With gentle murmur sooth ing my sad soul,  
It bears my gloomy thoughts far, far from me,  
And off my heart the heavy shadows roll.

And while beside this river's brink  
I lie oustretched, I think  
How true it is we suffer not alone,—  
Of griefs we know our own,  
But be he friend or brother  
We know not all the sorrows of another ;  
And some who act a cheerful part  
Have some great hidden grief  
From which there's no escape— to which there's  
no relief,  
That like a vulture rends the bleeding heart,  
Who yet will not complain,  
And ne'er betray,  
Cost what the struggle may,  
By any outward sign, the inward pain.

It is the inevitable law  
That man is born to trouble and to sorrow,  
And uncomplaining he should bear the cross,  
For if each to-morrow  
Brings not the solace that we hope to-day,  
Nor makes atonement for some bitter loss,  
It sets us farther on our onward way,

And leaves us nearer to that pleasant shore  
Where care and grief can trouble us no more.

Then whatsoe'er the Fates decree,  
It still shall be  
The constant burden of my prayer and song  
That I may have the power  
In stern Misfortune's hour,  
To suffer and yet evermore be strong.





## TO GLYCERA.

### I.

AFTER so long a thralldom, to be free,  
Is happiness supreme. I once supposed  
My pulse could never throb, except for thee ;  
Thou wert my heart's true Queen, but now, de-  
posed  
By thy rebellious subject, who at last  
Brooks not the Tyrant. Go, thy reign is past !

### II.

Though all is over, and 'twere worse than idle  
The ashes of this buried love to raise, —  
Yet thoughts come thronging, and I cannot bridle  
The tongue that sang so often in thy praise ;  
The World was all forgotten for thy sake ;  
And I must speak, or my full heart will break.

### III.

The recollection of the days now fled,  
When all my thoughts were trusted to thy care, —

When I still followed where thy footsteps led,  
And deemed it happiness thy griefs to share,—  
Shall, in the silent night, come back to thee,  
And fill thy saddened heart with dreams of me.

## IV.

And I, alas ! must think and sigh the while,  
How, overcoming all my manhood's pride,  
I hailed the sunshine of thy glorious smile,  
And knew no pain, but absence from thy side ;  
Apart from thee, this loving heart of mine  
Throbbed the dull moments till my lips met thine,—

## V.

And then my blood, with lava-flowing tide,  
Coursing tumultuous through each swelling vein,  
Swept like a torrent down the mountain side,  
Straight to my burning soul and maddening brain ;  
And in those hours of terrible unrest,  
I told the love that raged within my breast.

## VI.

Thy lips responded, and my joyous heart  
Leaped like a courser, as he nears the goal ;  
My reason fled, o'ercome by Beauty's Art,  
And I was thine at hazard of my soul.  
Nay, speak not ! I have known by far too well,  
Thy voice's music, and its magic spell.

## VII.

But now, when Reason reasserts her sway,  
I feel that Life hath nobler ends than Love,  
The fond ambitious dreams of Boyhood's day  
Return, as to the Ark the wandering dove ;  
Hard is the struggle, but I rend thy chain,  
And stand erect. I am a man again !

## VIII.

Enfranchised now, no more my steps shall stray  
To thine abode. We part at length forever !  
I ne'er will let thy Siren voice essay  
To lure me back again. I swear, that never  
Will I behold thee, lest thy charms should move  
My lips to flatter, and my soul to love.

## IX.

No more in trembling accents will I sue,  
Or gather blossoms to bedeck thy head ;  
The Passion that I nursed until it grew  
Stronger than Reason, now is cold and dead,  
And cold and dead to thee shall be the heart  
Once so controlled by thy transcendent Art.

## X.

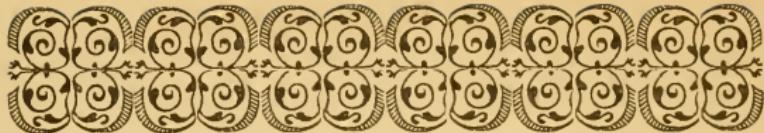
I grieve for mine own weakness ; I repine  
At moments lost in gazing on thy face ;

I have regained my heart, that long was thine,  
By one strong manly effort, and no trace  
Of all my fond affection shall be seen ;  
I will not be the slave that I have been.

## xi.

We part ! Farewell ! I never can forget  
What it were better could Oblivion shroud ;  
But will not pause to tell one sad regret ;  
I'll breathe a sigh, then onward with the crowd.  
Is that a tear ? My struggles are in vain ;  
See, Love, I'm kneeling at thy feet again !





## TWILIGHT AND MOONLIGHT.

### TWILIGHT.

#### I.

THE twilight with its mistiness and gloom  
Over the peopled city slowly falls,  
While I am sitting in my lonely room  
Watching the shadows deepening on the walls.  
Let me not think of visions that have past,—  
Of hopes of Fame,—of stern demands of duty,—  
Of Boyhood's dreams too fanciful to last,—  
I'll take the hour to sing of Love and Beauty.

#### II.

But ere the Lyre yields to my caressing,  
Sweet strains of music float upon the air,  
A gentle hand is on my shoulder pressing,  
I turn and see an angel by my chair.  
“From yon blue Heaven,” she says, “I guard and  
cherish  
All those who strive to win the Poet’s crown,  
Be not enslaved by Beauty or you perish  
And fall from Godlike heights ignobly down.”

## III.

I dare to answer, and with accents trembling  
Exclaim, "Let Fame depart, I'll not repine ;  
When Beauty smiles, my heart knows no dissem-  
bling,

And what were Glory to a Love like mine ! "  
"Alas," she says, "Has Reason then no chance ?  
Lift to her clarion voice for one brief minute ;"  
"Hold ! hold !" I cry, "I'll break her shining lance,  
For what is Love if there is Reason in it ? "

## IV.

Again she speaks, but now with exultation,  
"Your heart, I find, is in the right condition ;  
'Tis Love that gives the Poet inspiration,  
And power to fulfil his lofty mission ;  
Love on,—'twill keep the heart forever young,  
Hymn Beauty's praises wheresoe'er you're roving,  
The noblest songs by Poet ever sung  
Were sung by him who knew the pains of lov-  
ing."

## MOONLIGHT.

## V.

And now Diana, from her throne on high,—  
That virgin huntress with the silver bow,—

Becomes each moment brighter in the sky,  
And sheds her gentle light on all below ;  
And through each pane within my casement streaming,  
My room she lightens with her beams divine,  
It is the hour when a Poet's dreaming  
Is woven into verse, and this is mine.





## MYRRHA.

“ She came in all her Beauty, like the moon from the cloud  
of the East. Loveliness was around her as light. Her steps  
were like the music of songs.”

OSSIAN.

### I.

My Fancy now has tasked her utmost skill,  
And called before me an entrancing vision  
To soothe my heart, to charm away each ill,  
And lap me in a happiness Elysian ;

### II.

For I discern across the moonbeams flitting  
A sylphlike form of excellence most rare,  
And now around the couch whereon I’m sitting  
She floats in all her beauty through the air.

### III.

I know within that form reigns Myrrha’s heart,  
To none but her such fabled charms are given ;  
Nature, for once, has far exceeded Art,  
And sent her as a perfect work from Heaven.

## IV.

I seize the Lyre,— in vain I strive to sing  
 The love my tongue to her would fain express,  
 Her name alone breathes forth from every string,—  
 My Art is conquered by her loveliness.

## V.

The strength, that I had vainly deemed my stay,  
 Melts like the snow before her Beauty's light,—  
 Her charms divine usurp my mind by day,  
 And break repose with restless dreams by night.

## VI.

\*  
 In store for me are many dreary hours,  
 But, Myrrha, there are none for one so fair ;  
 Thy path shall be enamelled o'er with flowers,—  
 The Beautiful are God's especial care.





## AT THE FIRESIDE.

COME, dearest, ere they light the evening lamps,  
And sit with me and gaze upon the fire.  
I like to watch the dying embers fade ;  
Thus let my arm encircle thee ; — now rest  
Against my shoulder thy dear queenlike head,  
And I will tell thee how my wayward Life  
Was unfulfill'd until I won thy love ;  
For my sad soul was like the wandering dove  
Sent from the Ark, that found no resting place ;  
Or like some rudderless and shattered Bark  
Forsaken on a wild tempestuous sea,  
Drifting its aimless course from point to point,  
Fixed to no purpose. There were few to smile  
And bid God speed me on my onward course.  
Life had for me nor object, end, nor aim ;  
All noble aspirations, high resolves  
And fond ambitious dreams had fled. I seized  
The flowery wreath that smiling Pleasure held,  
And listened to her Siren voice, nor strove  
To loose the arms she flung around my neck ;  
But all was Vanity, — and I grew weary

Of this sad world of trouble, pain, and guilt.  
Dark was my soul, but when the light of thine  
Shone on me, I arose like some way-worn,  
Benighted traveller, who perceives that Day  
Is breaking in the East, and struggles on  
To greet the uprising Sun. Before thy beams,  
The clouds dispersed, and life again seemed bright.  
Taught by thy grand example then I learned  
How dear and pleasant are the ways of Truth.  
I strove to walk within her peaceful paths,  
And Thou wert my exceeding great reward.





## THE CROWNING MERCY.

### I.

FILL up the cup, my Beauty, fill up,  
We've a long way to travel before we can sup ;  
Your blue eyes are bright, and would they might light  
The dangerous path we must travel to-night ;  
Charlie has fled, there's a price on his head,  
And many a gallant at Worcester lies dead.

### II.

If the cropheds advance, we shall forfeit the chance  
To escape from these shores to luxurious France ;  
Yet here we'll remain for a moment to drain  
A flagon and sing a wild cavalier strain ;  
Ere to saddle we spring these rafters shall ring  
With death to Old Noll and long life to the King.

### III.

Many times by the side of Rupert, our pride,  
Have I had the honor in battle to ride ;  
In Marston Moor's fray, throughout all the day,  
I ne'er from the sound of his voice was away ;

At Naseby's fight, I rode close to his right,  
And helped him escape by the shade of the night.

## IV.

But never, I ween, has such carnage been seen  
In these wars as at Worcester to-day there has been ;  
Through the gates, which they crashed, the Puritans  
dashed,

And bright in the sunlight their morions flashed ;  
Thus taken by storm, our troops couldn't form,  
And the hand-to-hand conflict was bloody and warm.

## V.

No music I hear is so sweet to my ear  
As the din of the contest when weapons ring clear ;  
Our good swords were tough, our greeting was rough,  
And with crimson we dyed many jerkins of buff ;  
Fierce battle we gave all the day, and the wave  
Of Severn flowed red with the blood of the brave.

## VI.

It was war to the knife, and through the hot strife  
Each Cavalier knew that he fought for his life ;  
How sweet were the moans and the shrieks and the  
groans  
Of the knaves that our chargers' hoofs trod to the  
stones ;  
By Jove ! 'twas a fight, as to left and to right  
We cut and we flashed through that terrible fight.

## VII.

By Charlie we stood while it did any good ;  
But, when he had fled, we escaped as we could ;  
The Country is lost,—this we know to our cost,—  
And the boisterous channel to-night must be crost ;  
For success to our trip, pray give me a sip  
Of the glistening dew on that red pouting lip.

## VIII.

With such a sweet kisf, as that one and this,  
My fortune to-day has not been so amiss ;  
Feel no alarm for that wound on my arm,  
The fash you tied over it acts like a charm ;  
But fill up the cup, my Beauty, fill up,  
Then, Comrades, to horse, 'tis in France we must  
sup.





## LOVE, HONOR, AND GLORY.

### I.

LIKE a dying old Giant the wind howled and moaned,  
And shook with great fury the fashes,  
In sadness of heart by the fire I groaned,  
And traced out her face in the ashes ;  
The days of bright hopes like a dream had passed by,  
And Life seemed a very dull story,  
But I thought of the time when my pulses beat high  
And I sighed for Love, Honor, and Glory.

### II.

The fire at last went entirely out,  
And the candles, but I never missed them ;  
For Sleep on her pinions came flying about,  
And stooped down to my eyelids and kissed  
them ;  
Forgot for the time was each fear and each doubt, —  
Forgot each disheartening story, —  
Forgot every grief, — and my heart became stout,  
For I dreamed of Love, Honor, and Glory.



## TO THE NIGHT WINDS.

GENTLE winds, ye have come over mountain and dale,  
Ye have swept o'er the ocean and kissed the white sail ;  
Ye have entered the chamber and gazed on the flumbers  
Of her who is ever the theme of my numbers ;  
Ye have lingered awhile where my Charmer reposes,  
To breathe on her cheek, — that abode of the roses ;  
Ye have pressed for a moment that delicate lip,  
Where the bees of Hymettus their honey might sip ;  
Ye have hovered enraptured around her sweet bosom,  
More fragrant than dew on the Hyacinth's blossom ;  
And as with remembrance of her ye come freighted,  
My heart that was sad becomes strangely elated ;  
Ye can mark her repose in this desolate hour,  
For ye enter unheeded, where none have the power ;  
Then seek her again, in her home by the sea,

And bear to her bedside this message from me.  
Go ! tell her my heart, that has loved her in gladness,  
Would be fonder and truer in sorrow and sadness ;  
And through the wide world she may roam nor dis-  
cover

So truthful a friend and so faithful a lover.

Alas, this is idle ! Fate's cruel decree  
Forbids that her love should emparadise me ;  
But who can restore me my heart as she found it,  
Or my soul disenthral from the spell cast around it ?  
And when the time comes that forbids all diffem-  
bling, —

When darkness surrounds, and Life's taper is trem-  
bling,

I will breathe her dear name as my sorrows are end-  
ing,

And then my sad soul to its Heaven ascending  
Shall bear a fond prayer to the Powers supernal,  
That her life, like my love, may be pure and eternal.

And when o'er my ashes the lilies are blooming,  
The air that floats over me sweetly perfuming,  
Ye will pause by the spot where in peace I am lying,  
Unheeding the world and its smiling or sighing,  
And will mark that whenever the feeling sweeps o'er  
her,

That I died, as I always had lived, her adorer,  
She comes and bedews, as a sorrowful duty,  
The flowers that cannot surpafs her in beauty.



## STANZAS.

### I.

'Tis evening, and the moon above  
Doth gloriously shine ;  
And to the health of her I love  
I drink this ruby wine.

### II.

A thousand leagues my heart returns,  
Far, far across the brine,  
To her for whom my spirit yearns,  
To whom I drink this wine.

### III.

Her figure, graceful as the fawn,  
And slender as the vine  
From which the clustering grapes were torn  
To make this glorious wine,

### IV.

Would gain new strength, could she but print  
Her foot beside the Rhine,

And her pale cheek would wear a tint  
Transcending this red wine.

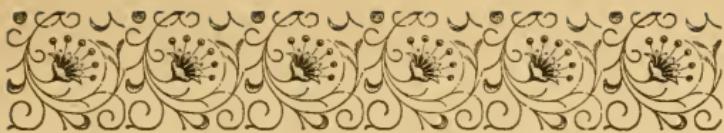
## v.

The moon would have a softer charm,  
A light still more divine,  
If she were leaning on my arm  
To whom I drink this wine.

## VI.

If there is virtue in a prayer  
That flows from lips of mine,  
Her life shall be the Angels care,  
Her happiness divine.





## A WREATH OF SMOKE.

### I.

WHEN clouds, o'ercharged with care and grief,  
Seem gathering around,  
'Tis in the rolled tobacco leaf  
That solace can be found ;  
With every puff there fades away  
Some true or fancied sorrow,  
And I am happy for the day,  
Whate'er betide the morrow.

### II.

The graceful wreaths of smoke I blow,  
To yon blue Heavens ascend,  
I bless each one, as off they go,  
Like some departing friend ;  
And wish that I could soar above,  
Or had, like them, the power  
To charm away from those I love  
Each sad and dreary hour.



## ACROSS THE WAY.

### I.

THE moon is silvering old Park-Street steeple,  
Likewise the trees,  
And sleep is creeping o'er the Boston people  
By slow degrees.

### II.

I throw my casement open wide, and wheel  
My easy-chair  
To face the street, that I may breathe and feel  
The cool night air.

### III.

And while reclining here I muse and ponder  
On life's decay,  
A light illuminates a chamber yonder  
Across the way.

### IV.

And as the tongue of midnight tells the hour  
From street to street,

I see upon the threshold of her bower  
So pure and sweet,

## V.

A Beauty standing, with a form excelling  
All dreams of Art,  
And feel a wonderful emotion swelling  
My throbbing heart.

## VI.

How gracefully she sets the flickering candle  
Upon the floor,  
The while she turns the little ivory handle  
And bolts the door.

## VII.

Then to the casement hastily advances  
That charming maid ;  
For one brief moment at the sky she glances,  
Then pulls the shade.

## VIII.

Ah ! will she shut out this extremely fine,  
Clear night of June ?  
Yes ! she unmasks not beauty so divine  
E'en to the moon.

## IX.

But think not, dear, your movements are unknown,  
For, by the aid  
Of Fancy, and the shadow that is thrown  
Upon the shade,

## X.

I feel,— and either were a faithful guide,—  
Extremely certain  
Of all that happens on the other side  
Of that thick curtain.

## XI.

Now of your tasteful garments you're divesting  
Most gracefully,  
To make yourself look still more interesting  
In "*robe de nuit.*"

## XII.

Across the room I see your form so fair  
Pats and repats,  
And now you're standing taking down your hair  
Before the glafs.

## XIII.

That hair abundant, whose rich golden curls  
Delight beholders,

Loosed from confinement by a few quick twirls  
Falls down your shoulders,—

## XIV.

Shoulders as fragrant as the airs about  
The funny South,—  
Now, darling, take those pins directly out  
Of your sweet mouth.

## XV.

You leave the glass abruptly, and I find  
That all is still ;  
How sweet your pretty face must look behind  
That snowy frill.

## XVI.

And now you read a verse of some sweet Poet  
You think divine,  
Transported would I be, could I but know it  
Were verse of mine.

## XVII.

And now upon the cushion by the chair  
Your figure bends,  
And from your lips a pure and heartfelt prayer  
To Heaven ascends.

## XVIII.

“ Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins  
Remembered ” now,  
And give one thought to me ere sleep begins  
To touch your brow.

## XIX.

So all is dark and quiet, you have just  
Put out the light ;  
Sleep, sleep protected by the Heaven you trust !  
. . . . Fair Saint,— Good night.





## NEW YEAR'S EVE.

### I.

OLD Father Time with glass in hand  
And scythe across his shoulder,  
Is by my side reminding me  
That I am growing older ;  
And sadly says the kind old man,  
In accents soft and clear,  
“ My hour-glass I soon shall turn,  
Then vanishes the year.”

### II.

So from this long and graceful jar  
I pour the fragrant wine,  
And, when old Time turns up his glass,  
I'll do the same to mine,  
And drink to all upon the land,  
And all upon the sea,  
And sigh the while I bid Farewell  
To Eighteen Fifty-Three.

## III.

I'll grieve not for deceitful friends  
Whose falseness I've detected,  
But drink to those exalted hearts  
I never have suspected,  
Who changing not with every turn  
Of Fortune's tipsy wheel,  
Are ever grappled to my soul  
With hooks of triple steel.

## IV.

I'll drink to her who does not scorn  
My rude unpolished verse,  
Whose love would be a talisman  
Though all the world should curse,  
And who would smile upon the chain  
With which I'd gladly bind her,—  
I'll drink to her with all my heart,  
And love her,— when I find her.





## MISS SWEETBRIAR'S COURTSHIP.

A BALLAD.

### I.

THERE stood, when happened some summers ago  
The events of the following story,  
A large stone hotel, as many folks know,  
At the end of Nahant's promontory ;  
And when they couldn't endure the heat,  
Then all the world and its daughter,  
Some of whom are "*élite*," but some very effete,  
Would start for the salt sea-water.

### II.

What bevies of feminine beauties rare,  
Such as seen in a poet's dream are,  
Going down to Nahant for the bracing air,  
Have I met in that little steamer ;  
And I thought it aware of its precious freight  
And endowed with human sensation,  
For every plank seemed very elate  
And gave an extra vibration.

## III.

Now of all the charmers who visited there,  
To look at the broad Atlantic,  
A few years since, was one who was fair,  
Surpassingly fair and romantic ;  
But as the story that I shall tell  
Is a very veracious history,  
The name of "*la plus belle des belles*"  
Must remain forever a mystery.

## IV.

Yet as names are very convenient things  
To the poet who strikes his lyre,  
And deeds of lovers and heroes sings,  
I shall call her Miss Jane Sweetbriar ;  
And this you will understand to be  
But a fanciful appellation,  
For her real name wouldn't be breathed by me  
On any consideration.

## V.

Now Jane Sweetbriar,— with her mamma,—  
Was the very earliest comer,  
For the rooms were engaged by her dear papa  
Throughout the entire summer ;  
But 'twas during the month of the sultry air,  
When the fiery dog-star rages,

That occurred and transpired the little affair  
I relate in the following pages.

## VI.

Miss Jane Sweetbriar was always told  
By her mother and other relations  
She was destined to make, in the world so cold,  
The greatest of all sensations ;  
That her father was wealthy, and she was fair,  
And by nature designed to wed  
A reigning prince,— or the son and heir  
Who'd be prince when his father was dead.

## VII.

Now as this was instilled from her earliest youth,  
Of course she grew very inflated,  
Believing it all to be gospel truth,  
And her princely lover awaited ;  
And though gentlemen very well born and bred,  
Accomplished, refined, and clever,  
Were attentive, she bridled her haughty head  
And distinctly said, “ No, Sir, never.”

## VIII.

Then men began to keep very aloof,  
As the vulgar would say, “ fight shy,”  
For they never will woo when there's pretty good  
proof  
It isn't of use to try.

And I heard full many a person say,  
Who of charity hadn't a particle,  
That her market she'd certainly overstay  
And become a shop-worn article.

## IX.

But one August day by the boat there came,  
To adorn the hotel society,  
A short young man with a very long name  
Who was dressed with extreme propriety,  
And as he danced so exceedingly well,  
And sang to the ladies, divinely,  
And was quite an agreeable sea-shore swell,  
He got on, of course, quite finely.

## X.

But that he might be the better received  
By the girls, he to some confided  
That he was a Duke, which they all believed,  
But I will be blest if I did,  
For I most audaciously dared surmise  
That his Grace was an imposition,  
But angry glances from beautiful eyes  
Frowned on the foul suspicion.

## XI.

Now female artillery brought to bear,  
Opened at once their fire,

And the Duke soon fell at the exquisite pair  
Of feet of Miss Jane Sweetbriar ;  
And Jane was as pleasant as she could be,  
And put on her airs and graces,  
And it wasn't a difficult thing to see  
She was going through all her paces.

## XII.

And if any one asked where she could be found,  
They'd say, "That foreigner has her,  
Constantly walking her 'round and around  
The ladies' upper piazza."  
Ah, me ! If every balcony rail  
Had the means of communication,  
How many a soft and tender tale  
It could tell of each sweet flirtation.

## XIII.

Jane's delicate blood the Duke would stir,  
As he'd tell, in his manner romantic,  
Of the "Chateau in Spain" that was ready for her  
Just over the briny Atlantic.  
And then he'd describe the magnificent spot  
That was so like a fairy scene,  
Just as mendacious Claude Melnotte  
Used to talk to the silly Pauline.

## XIV.

And now one evening after tea,  
As they sat in their room together,  
Did Jane and her darling mother agree  
That the Duke had views, but whether  
'Twere best to consent at once, or defer,  
Was a matter for consultation,  
And mamma told Jane it was left to her,  
After serious conversation.

## XV.

Then Jane said, “ Mother, I’m twenty-three,  
And no prince has come hither to wed,  
And I think on the whole it were better for me  
To put up with a Duke instead.”  
And so ’twas decided. The following day  
The rumor abroad was carried  
That Jane Sweetbriar was “ *fiancée* ”  
To the Duke, and would soon be married.

## XVI.

Then how important the family grew,  
And evinced an increased gentility,  
Which proved that they were possessing a true  
Republican love for nobility ;

And even papa declared that he  
From trade would at once retire,  
When on a ducal family tree  
Was engrafted a fair Sweetbriar.

## XVII.

It soon turned out that this elegant Duke,  
(Oh, Jane, what a sad disaster !)  
At a New York Inn was assistant cook,  
And had robbed and fled from his master.  
Now this employed the gossips awhile,  
And I fancied that I detected  
Many a very triumphant smile  
On the faces of Jane's rejected.

## XVIII.

To hear the remarks and perceive the sneers  
Of her friends, was, of course, unpleasant,  
So she went abroad to remain for years,  
And there she resides at present ;  
And doubtless noblemen mark her way,  
And on Love's fleet wings pursue her,  
But she'll never forget till her dying day  
The counterfeit Duke,— her wooer.



## TO THE BIG TREE ON BOSTON COMMON.

### I.

WHEN first from Mother Earth you sprung,  
Ere Puritans had come among  
The savages to loose each tongue

In psalms and prayers,  
These “Forty Acres, more or less,”  
Now putting on their summer dres,  
Were but a “howling wilderness”  
    Of wolves and bears.

### II.

Most wondrous changes you have seen  
Since you put forth your primal green  
    And tender shoot;

Three hundred years your life has spanned,  
Yet calm, serene, erect you stand,  
Of great renown throughout the land,  
Though showing marks of Time’s hard hand  
    From crown to root.

## III.

You, when a slender sapling, saw  
The persecuted reach this shore  
And in their turn  
Treat others just as they'd been treated ;  
To mete the measure that's been meted,  
How man does yearn.

## IV.

Of tales, perchance devoid of truth,  
With which they would in early youth  
My heart appall,  
Was one the goffips used to tell  
About a witch so grim and fell  
They hung on you for raising — Well,  
It wasn't Saul.

## V.

Since you beheld the light of day  
A race has nearly passed away, —  
A warlike nation,  
Who oft with fire-water plied  
Lost all their bravery and pride  
And yielded to the rapid stride  
Of annexation.

## VI.

Behold, a mightier race appears  
 And high a vast Republic rears  
     Her giant features,  
 And westward steadily we drive  
 The few poor Indian who survive  
 And barely keep the race alive,—  
     Degenerate creatures !

## VII.

For, are we not the mighty Lords  
 And Masters of all savage hordes  
     (In our opinion)?  
 And when we with Inferiors deal  
 Do not we use the iron heel  
 And make them wince and writhe and feel  
     Their Lords' dominion ?

## VIII.

You heard the first rebellious hum  
 Of voices, and the fife and drum  
     Of revolution ;  
 And heard the bells and welkin ring  
 When they threw off old George the King  
 And thereby gained a better thing,—  
     Our Constitution.

## IX.

And you still thrive and live to see  
The country prosperous and free,  
In spite of all  
The very sage prognostications  
Of prophets in exalted stations  
Who could foretell the fate of Nations,  
And said she'd fall.

## X.

Majestic Tree, you've seen much worth  
From little Boston issue forth,  
And many men,  
Who love their kind and give their store  
To help the suffering and the Poor ;—  
Heaven blefs their wealth and grant them more,  
I pray again.

## XI.

And you shall see much more beside  
Ere to your root, old Boston's pride,  
The axe is laid ;  
And long, I trust, the time will be  
Ere Mayor and Council sit on thee  
And find with unanimity  
That you're decayed.

## XII.

For you are still quite hale and stanch  
Though here and there perchance a branch  
Is slightly rotten,  
And you will stand and hold your sway  
When he who pens this rhyme to-day  
Shall mingle with the common clay  
And be forgotten.





## A REVISIT.

### I.

ONE bright and charming day last Fall  
Some miles of ground I wandered over  
And climbed o'er many a fence and wall  
In the pursuit of quail and plover ;  
But all my toil was vain and fruitless,  
My fowling-piece not once I fired,  
The expedition proved quite bootless,  
And I became extremely tired.

### II.

The day declined, — the Sun was setting,  
As is its custom, in the West,  
And I, this world of care forgetting,  
Reclined beneath a tree to rest ;  
But ere my drowsy senses failed me  
A stalwart farmer I descried,  
Who from his market-wagon hailed me,  
And asked me if I'd like to ride.

## III.

“ I live in Guilford, next to Stow,  
    You’ll see it from the hill quite plain,  
I’ll drive you there and you can go  
    To Boston in the evening train.”  
So, thankful for the invitation  
    That honest Rusticus had offered,  
I left my graffy situation  
    And took the seat so kindly proffered.

## IV.

“ So, that is Guilford,— I am glad  
    To see the place ; I well remember  
I passed some months there when a lad,—  
    Bless me, the tenth of next November  
Will make just twenty years since I  
    Went there a graceless little scholar  
(Alas ! How quickly Time slips by !)  
    In corduroys and ruffled collar.

## V.

“ I boarded with old Parson Short,  
    Whose dwelling stood beside the hill.”  
“ The Parson’s house I’ve lately bought.”  
“ Indeed ! is he not living still ? ”

“ You might have known he’d go at length  
 The way of sinner and of faint.  
 At Eighty-five he lost his strength,  
 Then died, Sir, of his old complaint.”

## VI.

“ Though crofs, he was the best of men,  
 And I’ll not let his faults outlive him,  
 He’ll never box my ears again  
 And so I cordially forgive him  
 And trust that ’mid the stars and saints  
 He now partakes celestial joys,  
 Relieved of all his bad complaints,  
 The asthma, and unruly boys.

## VII.

“ And where is white-haired Dr. Sloat ?  
 With venerable locks of snow ;  
 He used to make my boyish throat  
 A channel for Elixir Pro.  
 I think I see his little shop,—  
 His bookcase, with its queer old fixtures  
 And stuff’d gray owl upon the top  
 That seemed to guard the pills and mixtures.

## VIII.

“ The map of Europe on the wall,  
 The grinning skull upon the shelf ;

His patients,— did he kill them all ? ”  
 “ He did, and then he killed himself,  
 For feeling out of sorts one day  
 He took his celebrated pill,  
 Then died, and since, I’m glad to say  
 We haven’t had a person ill.”

## IX.

“ Ah ! There’s the pond I used to swim in,  
 And gather fragrant water-lilies  
 To give the sweetest of young women,  
 Who lived near where the cider-mill is.  
 Yes ! she my very earliest flame was,  
 (At ten Love’s very hard to smother,)  
 Matilda Jane her charming name was,—  
 She’s now a wife, I trust, and mother.”

## X.

Our drives, like all drives, had an end,  
 We reached the parsonage at last ;  
 “ Alas ! ” said I, “ my worthy friend,  
 This sets me thinking of the Past ;  
 I recollect the spot right well,  
 The very woodpile seems the same ;  
 And there’s my chamber in the L,  
 To which no sunbeams ever came.

## XI.

“ The venerable tree that bore  
 Those pears so puckery and hard,  
 Is standing, as it did of yore,  
 Right in the middle of the yard ;  
 And there’s the church,— I see the vane  
 Is pointing still to sou’-sou’-west ;  
 It always did,— but why complain  
 Of aught that does its very best ? ”

## XII.

I’ll take a seat on yonder wall  
 The while I’m waiting for the train,  
 My bygone joys and griefs recall,  
 And live my boyhood o’er again ;  
 But stay ! if life I’ve found is not  
 Just what my youthful fancy painted,  
 And I revisit this old spot  
 With care and sorrow well acquainted,

## XIII.

And if no gentle heart is near me,  
 Beating responsive to my own,  
 To aid, to counsel, and to cheer me,  
 But I Life’s battle fight alone ;  
 Why should I rend the veil apart  
 That keeps the Past from coming o’er me,

To cast a shadow on my heart,  
When I've the Future all before me ? ”

## XIV.

There still are prizes worth the strife,  
And Fame and Honor to the gainer ;  
The soul that takes sad views of life  
Should let this wholesome truth sustain her ;  
My heart, less buoyant than of yore,  
Still asks of Fortune prosperous breezes,  
I've pushed my shallop from the shore,  
Its fate to be what Heaven pleases.





## TO A CLASSMATE.

“ We have heard the chimes at midnight.”

HENRY IV., SECOND PART.

### I.

OLD times come o'er me, and I fain would hear  
Something of one my heart holds ever dear,—

Whether he's living ;

Oh, can it be that he I love has gone  
Whence there is no return, to that long bourn ?

I've my misgiving.

### II.

So now, my friend, for want of something better,  
I'll send this very short and rhyming letter,

To ascertain

If you still live, and recollect the chimes  
We've heard at midnight. Those delightful times  
Come not again !

### III.

And how oftentimes to Fancy's realms we'd mount,  
And drink deep draughts — from the Pierian fount,

To banish cares ;

Then bivalve broils that marred the night's repose,  
 And then the larks,— I mean with which we rose  
     In time for prayers !

## IV.

Our class is scattered. Some by trade have thriven,  
 And some have laid their treasure up in heaven,  
     (A safe investment,)  
 And there are some the young idea who teach,  
 And some who practise, some who only preach,  
     But here's no jest meant.

## V.

Some live in town, their quiet way pursuing,  
 Who would be pleased to hear what you are doing,  
     And how you are ;  
 So write us word, in prose, or woo the Muse ;  
 That you do either well, whene'er you choose,  
     We're quite aware.

## VI.

How are your talents ? Have they run to waste ?  
 Do you still write, or have you lost your taste  
     For the poetic ?  
 Are you religious ? Have you joined the church ?  
 And have you found, or are you still in search  
     Of the *Aesthetic* ?

## VII.

Do you find aught that gives you satisfaction ?  
Does life present to you the same attraction  
    It did “ lang syne ? ”  
Or have your hopes of winning fame and glory,  
And being widely known, in song and story  
    Vanished, like mine ?

## VIII.

Unless you've sadly changed, I know you've gained  
The peace that's purchased by a life unstained,  
    Upright and moral ;  
More satisfactory than vulgar praise,  
And better, nobler far, than poets' bays,  
    Or heroes' laurel.

## IX.

Write me and tell me how you pass the time,  
In your delightful and far-distant clime  
    Of fruits and flowers.  
But ere I close, perhaps you'd like to know  
Of some with whom you passed, a while ago,  
    Such pleasant hours.

## X.

Well ; Kate still plays her tinkling guitar,  
And fits and gazes at that favorite star  
    She named for you,

And sighs and languishes, and rolls her eye ;  
 She thinks you're coming back ! (At one time I  
     Believed that true.)

## XI.

And as for Caroline, she took offence,  
 Merely because I said she wanted sense !  
     So we don't speak.

Poor little Sue, with whom you used to ride,  
 Last June was married ; and the darling died  
     Within a week !

## XII.

How could you find it in your heart to leave her !  
 She was a splendid girl ; in fact, I never  
     Have seen a finer.

Her sister Jane—whom, doubtless, you remember—  
 Married a missionary, last November,  
     And went to China.

## XIII.

And now, farewell ! — my horse is at the door ;  
 I'm for a ride, and therefore can't say more.

I really miss you,  
 And mean to write again, some future day,  
 But now I've merely time enough to say,  
     God bless you.



## A COURSE OF BARK.

OF Peter Van Duyfen, a Dutchman by birth,  
But a toper by habit and tanner by trade,  
Who for many a year but encumbered the earth,  
Yet at last of the Church was an ornament made,  
    Whose true reformation  
    And regeneration  
So struck with surprise every friend and relation,  
Astonished his neighbors, delighted his wife,  
(Who had long felt aggrieved by his dissolute life) :  
And the cause of his sudden return to the fold,  
Of which the particulars never were told,  
And have hitherto been so enveloped in mystery,  
    The beneficent muse  
    Will no longer refuse  
To relate the authentic and wonderful history.

Now, Peter perceived not the shame and disgrace  
Of a thickness of speech and a rubicund face,  
And the name he had gained of “a very hard case ; ”  
    And the deeper he drank  
    The more deeply he fank,  
Till his body was nought but an alcohol tank.

The day had long passed since he offered his reasons  
For constant libations, at all times and seasons ;  
And though such apologies seldom are found,  
Nor supported by reasoning very profound,

Yet I never would sneer at them,

Laugh at or jeer at them,

Or hurl an expression uncommonly queer at them,  
For they prove that their maker is fully awake

To the fact that he runs 'gainst the views of society,

And feels himself called on excuses to make,

Just to show he's not lost to all sense of property.

Mr. A. takes a drop for a pain in his head,

And he thinks it will cure him without any question ;

Mr. B. drinks because he has oft heard it said

A little good brandy assists the digestion ;

Mr. C. will remark he's been ill for a week ;

Mr. D. has a very bad pain in his cheek ;

Mr. E. fears the salad may possibly hurt him ;

Mr. F. has the blues, and he drinks to divert him ;

The powerful argument offered by G.,  
Is that, much to his joy, he has lately been told  
Hot whisky and water is good for a cold ;

And so it goes on down to X., Y., and Z.

The reasons for what a man wishes to do,

Though oftentimes weak, yet are never a few.

I once knew a man so addicted to grog  
That he'd drink till his senses were lost in a fog,  
Because he'd been working, he said, like a dog.  
I presume that the meaning he wished to convey  
Was, of course, that he'd been working hard all the  
day ;

But, as far as my own small experience goes,  
The work that all those that belong to the race  
Called canine, perform, is, in some funny place,  
(Forever preferring the large cellar-doors,) With their jaws softly cushioned on both their fore-paws,

To sniff off the flies as they light on their nose, —  
And I always opined  
He was that way inclined,  
For, though earnestly seeking, I never could find,  
That science or art or religion or trade  
Had ever derived the least possible aid  
From any exertion he ever had made.

Now, I advocate always excessive sobriety,  
Though I never have joined a tee-total society,  
And might not say nay,  
On a very hot day,  
To a very large goblet of champagne "*frappé*,"  
Regardless of all Mrs. Grundy might say,  
And provided, of course, there was nothing to pay ;  
Yet, 'tis better to keep from temptation away,

For I learned when a lad, in a school of design,  
What a very hard matter is *drawing a line*.

But it seems, while I pen this irregular metre,  
That I'm saying uncommonly little of Peter.  
So, without more ado, I will briefly relate

His narrow escape from a danger he ran,  
By which he was saved from a terrible fate,  
And instantly made a respectable man.

Though Peter, I've said, was a tanner by trade,  
Yet a fortune by tanning he never had made,—  
For business of any kind needs attention,  
A fact it is never amiss to mention,—  
And his customers fled from him, one after one,  
When they found that his work was most wretchedly  
done,  
And saw what a rig he was trying to run.  
Then he'd nothing to do, yet for spirits he'd spend,  
And soon discovered, with many regrets,  
That *liquor* will never *liqui*-date debts,  
And his course must speedily come to an end.  
His creditors clamored for their demands,  
And his tannery soon passed out of his hands ;  
With the brindle dog he was forced to part,  
Which touched, though it didn't renew, his heart.  
His wife worked on in grief and pain,  
That her child shouldn't cry for bread in vain ;

And she struggled and hoped, as women will,  
While Peter sank lower and lower still ;

Soliciting alms of each passer-by,  
Drinking throughout the day his fill,

And lodging at night in the nearest sty.

If I picture him truly, you'll say I draw  
As wretched a being as ever you saw.

But still, in the midst of his downward course,  
Would arise a feeling of deep remorse,  
That would lead him oft in sorrow at night —

When ghosts and goblins gibber and moan,  
Who are never beheld by the morning light —

To visit the tannery once his own ;  
And one stormy night, as he staggered along,  
Meandering the hides and the vats among,  
While the wind blew high and the night was dark,

There came a gust that took off his hat ;  
He tried to catch it, but reeled and fell,  
And down he went with a fearful yell,

Tumbling headlong into a vat,  
There to go through with *a course of bark*.

Down he went, and he splashed and sputtered,  
And fierce were the cries that the victim uttered ;  
But fruitless all, — there was no one near, —  
Not a human being with ears to hear,  
And a heart to feel, and a rope to throw ;

Yet, had there been, I can scarcely tell,

(For what others will do no one can know,) )

If they wouldn't have thought it just as well,  
And have left him to tan with the hides below.

Then Peter's agony soon began,  
For his past career appeared before him,  
And he knew himself a detested man,  
And that none would in the least deplore him ;  
He knew repentance was all too late,  
That he soon must yield to impending fate,  
Down, down to sink, and there to stay,  
Till some, Heaven knows how distant, day,  
When they'd find him tanned in the usual way ;  
Then how they'd laugh, and speculate whether  
He'd make on the whole a durable leather,  
And load him with well-deserved abuse,  
And say that for once they'd make him of use,  
And then into soles they'd cut up his body,  
So well preserved by the tan and the toddy.

But while this rushed across his brain,  
He twice went down and rose again ;  
And now his strength was failing fast,  
And weaker grew each vain endeavor —  
One bubbling shriek — it was the last  
    Of Peter, who then sank forever, —  
Or would, had not that deathly cry  
Struck on the ear of a passer-by,

In the shape of the same intelligent brute  
That Peter had owned in his best estate ;  
And now of his kindness he reaped the fruit,  
By being saved from a fearful fate ;  
For this most grateful of brindled Towzers,  
With a bound, and a dash,  
And a howl, and a splash,  
Jumped into the vat, as quick as a flash,  
And fastened his jaws in a leg of his trowfers.

Ah ! how one's experience constantly teaches  
What many a stern and cold moralist preaches,  
That Gilead possesses for all men a balm,  
And a storm is a certain forerunner of calm,  
And when all things appear  
Most dark, cheerless, and drear,  
That circumstance proves that the daylight is near ;  
For, when grief and despondency wholly enslave us,  
And sad the forebodings and fears of the heart,  
When it seems as if nought from destruction could  
save us,  
And the last rays of hope in the darkness depart,  
Unlooked-for assistance will raise and assuage us,  
Although adventitious, yet most advantageous.

But the course of events to delay by reflections,  
In a writer of tales, is the worst of objections ;  
And I think I shall run little hazard in stating,

That when such a person abandons narrating,  
And takes in its stead both to profing and prating,  
He's a bore of a size that there's no overrating ;  
And one's hero to leave at a critical time  
Should be reckoned by readers not less than a crime ;

    And I ought to have said

    That Peter, half-dead,

Was rescued when hope had entirely fled,  
And have told you at once how his canine preserver,  
By tugging with *dog*-gedness, vigor, and fervor,

    Through the darkness a guide,

    Brought him close to the side

Of the vat, where a rope had been recently tied.  
If a man when he's drowning will catch at a straw,  
Why, of course, he will catch at a rope all the more ;  
So Peter struck out, and at last made a grasp  
At the rope, and held on with the muscular clasp  
Of a man who is just at his very last gasp ;  
And there he hung for the rest of the night,  
Till the morning broke with its streaks of light,

    When several workmen, who happened to pass,  
Saved both of the brutes from their perilous state,  
And they carried Peter right out of the gate,

    Across the road to a field of grafts,  
And there they punched him, and rolled him over ;  
And you'll not deny when I venture to state  
That, though in the grafts, yet he wasn't in clover ;  
But success attended the operation,

And restored the suspended animation,  
By bringing on the proper pulsation ;  
And he came to himself, and then went to his wife,  
A different man for the rest of his life.

No muse of mine possesses the art  
To tell in any poetical strain  
Of the rapture pervading a woman's heart,  
Whatever her rank and worldly station,  
When she finds that her prayers were not made in  
vain,  
For of joy that seems a foretaste of Heaven  
A true portrayal can never be given,  
But must ever be left to imagination.

I fear I'm tedious, so I'll briefly say,  
That Peter lived from that eventful day —  
Or night — an honest, prudent, upright man ;  
And many a long-lost friend of old  
Held forth his hand when he was told,  
That for the future Peter had a plan.  
By toil and prudence, and some slight assistance,  
He, step by step, regained the ground he'd lost.  
To all temptation he made fierce resistance,  
Thinking experience was not worth its cost.  
Now first at meeting, loudest in the prayer,  
You'd scarce suppose he'd e'er from virtue drifted ;

And many a person I have heard declare,  
That in exhorting he seemed truly gifted.  
Soon fortune smiled, for vice was at an end,  
And though 'twas humble, he adorned his station ;  
To all good projects was a zealous friend,  
And gave his son a liberal education ;  
And oft in after years, when old and fat,  
The village boys at eve would cluster round him,  
To hear him tell the story of the Vat,  
And how poor dead and buried Towzer found him.  
Perchance the precepts that he threw around  
Did not fall profitless on barren ground.





## TO THE MERMAID.

“Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee.”

HAMLET.

### I.

MYSTERIOUS HYBRID ! Near the Fejee Isles  
You were entrapped, they say, one Summer's eve,  
When, unsuspicious of the seaman's wiles,  
You sweetly sung, (but this I can't believe,)  
With execution that outrivaled GRISI,  
Arias from operas by no means easy.

### II.

Strange denizen of somewhere in the deep,  
You come to us so very well preserved  
That we might think you in the tranquil sleep  
- Your innocence and beauty well deserved,  
Although your graceful figure's quite erect ;  
For what from Mermaids could we not expect ?

### III.

But there's no power now in your dark eyes  
To look with scorn upon the dandy's suit,

You answer not to beauty's smiles and sighs ;  
Then must that heart be stilled, that tongue be  
mute ;  
And this glass cage, excluding you from air,  
Proves the sad fact that life is absent there.

## IV.

I promised me a very pleasant task,  
And hoped to pass the evening *tête-à-tête* ;  
There's many a question that I wished to ask,  
Concerning all the customs of your state ;  
I'm getting up a book, and looked to you  
For stores of information strange and new.

## V.

I wished to know if Mermaids had a king,  
Or chose a president each year or two,—  
Had stringent laws, for that's the sort of thing  
To make the populace their duty do ;  
Or lived together in a crazed community,  
Where each did as he listed, with impunity ;

## VI.

And all that happens in those coral groves  
That you inhabit in the realms below ;  
If you write tender verses to your loves,  
If there's a place where naughty Mermaids go,—

If you have lectures in the Winter season, —  
And if your Poets write both rhyme and reason ?

## VII.

If you have Mermaid lawyers and divines,  
And if the last say everything is vanity ;  
Whether you speculate in copper mines,  
And are not Mermaids subject to insanity ;  
If pure salt water's all you have to drink,  
And if your tails don't sometimes get a kink ?

## VIII.

Fond of the water you must surely be,  
But do you have regattas every year ?  
And do you navigate the briny sea  
In sea-weed barks, — or use your tails to steer  
Some scooped-out tortoise shells from grot to grot ;  
And is there any one who owns a yacht ?

## IX.

Are any of the Mermaids politicians ?  
Do they fulfil each promise to the letter ?  
And do you find, if you employ physicians,  
That of their stuff the less you take the better  
Your health becomes ? In fact, I'm very sure  
You must be patrons of the “ Water Cure.”

## X.

Do you prohibit smoking in the streets ?

Do you confine the voting to the males ?

What is the salutation when one meets

Another Mermaid ? Do you shake your tails ?

Is charity much practised in the sea,

Or do you fancy scandal with your tea ?

## XI.

Have you the Magazines and the Reviews ?

Do any of your spinsters have the vapors ?

How soon do you obtain the steamer's news ?

And pray, do all the Mermaids take the papers ?

Do your young men do military duty ?

And what's the standard market-price of putty ?

## XII.

But this is useless, — the grim tyrant, Death,

Has placed his icy hand upon your brow ;

Had I been near, to catch your parting breath,

(It's very safe for me to say so, now,)

I might have gained a mass of information

That now is lost to me and to the nation.

## XIII.

I grieve to think some infidels there be

Who smile in scorn whene'er your name they hear,

Make it a point to disbelieve in thee,  
 And dare to speak with supercilious sneer,  
 Who say you are a wondrous incongruity,  
 A specimen of Yankee ingenuity.

## XIV.

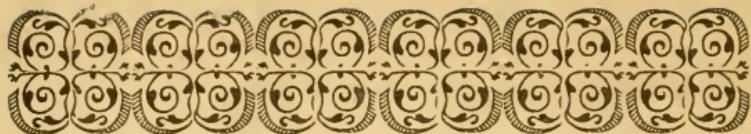
As for myself, I'm willing to believe  
 In all that travellers delight to tell ;  
 I think the mesmerizers don't deceive,  
 I frown on those who say that you're a "fell ;"  
 I think all the magicians superhuman,  
 And will believe the Giantess a woman.

## XV.

I place a trust in the Aërial Ship,  
 My love for the Hydrarchos is quite fervent,  
 I've cruised about our coast to get a peep  
 At my much flighted friend, the great Sea Serpent.  
 A man can't put himself to nobler uses  
 Than taking sides with those the world abuseth.

## XVI.

And now, farewell ! There's more that I could say,  
 For my regard becomes each moment stronger,  
 But I'll postpone it for some other day ;  
 This won't be read, if it is any longer ;  
 You'll triumph yet, despite the sceptic's laugh,  
 Marvellous specimen of half and half !



## A NIGHT IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS.

HOW THE WRITER PLAYED THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY,—  
THE RESULT OF THE SAME, AND AN INSTRUCTIVE MORAL  
DEDUCED THEREFROM.

IT was a drear December night,  
My duties were performed,—  
The Chairman, as he paid my fee,  
Remarked how hard it stormed ;  
Perhaps he thought the lecture poor —  
Or, didn't think at all,  
Or didn't care what might that night  
The lecturer befall ;  
I asked him where the Tavern was,—  
He pointed down the street,  
So Tavernward I bent my steps  
And faced the cutting fleet.  
“ What ho, within there, House ! I say !  
Oh, bless your scraggy head !  
Grim Boniface, and give to me  
This stormy night a bed ! ”  
He faintly smiled and said to me  
He'd do the best he could,

While I, as faintly smiling back,  
Replied, I hoped he would.  
“I think,” said he, “I have a room  
That has a bed to spare ;”  
“Enough,” said I, “my wearied frame  
Is anxious to be there.”  
He led the way,— I followed him  
To—I forget the number ;  
Two beds were there, in one I saw  
A traveller in slumber.  
Five minutes later, and disrobed  
And gazing at the ceiling,  
I felt the charms of drowsiness  
O'er all my senses stealing ;  
But when “the early village” clock  
Announced that it was four,  
I was awakened by a yawn  
That sounded like a roar,  
I slyly cast my eyes about  
And saw my unknown friend  
In very slim apparel, and  
A-sitting up on end ;  
He rubbed his eyes, he scratched his nose,  
He listened to the storm,  
His teeth they chattered in his head  
As if he wasn't warm ;  
And while I lay and looked at him,  
I wondered more and more,

And saw him glance towards my bed  
And step upon the floor,  
Then hurry on his clothes and tie  
Hisippet round his throat,  
And put his head inside his hat  
And button up his coat,  
Then walk up to the glass and take  
His razor in his hand,—  
The while on every pore of mine  
Did watery globules stand ;  
I thought he meant to kill me, and  
Made ready for a spring,  
But it seems he wasn't thinking  
Of any such a thing,  
For he put it in his carpet-bag  
And slowly turned the key,  
And as he drew it from the lock  
He looked again at me ;  
And then the sole hypothesis  
By which these movements mystic  
I could explain, was that the man  
Had turns somnambulistic.  
My kindly feelings rose at this,—  
Thought I, this luckless stranger  
I must observe, to see that he  
Comes not to any danger ;  
He took his carpet-bag and left  
And softly closed the door,—

One instant, and I stood erect  
In middle of the floor,  
Then dressed myself with greater speed  
Than ever yet did mortal,  
And seized my hat, crept down the stairs,  
And issued from the portal ;  
I saw him cross a turnip-field  
And then the turnpike take,  
And as I thought he was *asleep*,  
I followed in his *wake* ;  
I wondered where he meant to go,  
And fancied, with a shiver,  
His object was to drown himself  
On coming to the river ;  
But no ; he safely crossed the bridge,  
While I crept close behind,  
Prepared to seize him if he seemed  
To suicide inclined ;  
He then pushed on to where there stood  
A little way-side inn,  
And there he knocked until he woke  
The bar-keeper within ;  
I, looking through the window-panes,  
Distinctly saw him take  
A glass of something hot and strong  
As if he were awake ;  
Then out he came and on he sped,  
In seeming desperation,

For three long miles until he reached  
A lonesome railway station ;  
The truth flashed out, — he meant to throw  
Himself across the track,  
And so Humanity forbade  
My longer holding back,  
And as the day was breaking fast  
I felt a trifle bolder,  
So walked up to the wretched man  
And slapped him on the shoulder ;  
He turned on me most tiger-like  
And said, “Confound your eyes !  
Just you be careful how you take  
A fellow by surprise.”  
I stammered out — because the case  
Admitted no dissembling —  
That I had followed him for miles  
With all my members trembling,  
For fear lest into danger’s jaws  
He might perchance be brought  
While he was walking in his sleep,  
As I sincerely thought.  
He looked at me from head to foot,  
Then sneeringly he said,  
“ You’re either drunk or cracked or else  
The fools are not all dead.”  
And thus for merely yielding to  
The dictates of humanity,

I was accused of drunkenness,  
Of folly, and insanity ;  
A lesson then and there was taught,—  
To mind my own affairs,  
And in spite of all temptation,  
To let other folks mind theirs.





## TO A BUTTERFLY AT SEA.

### I.

'Tis very kind, though vastly queer,  
That you should call to see me here,  
    And I'll address you ;  
For though I cannot understand  
How you came out so far from land,  
And you'll not tell, yet there's my hand,  
    I greet and bless you !

### II.

But should as soon expect to see  
Moss-rose-buds on the main cross-tree ;  
    (Ah, how I'd pet them !)  
Or 'round about the capstan's foot  
A bed of violets taking root,  
And telling me, although they're mute,  
    Not to forget them ! —

### III.

Or in the shadow of the sail  
A lily lifting up her pale  
    And lovely face,

As on the ratlines to espy  
A gay and brilliant butterfly,  
Seeking in vain, with anxious eye,  
One flowery place.

## IV.

Sail on with us,—there's no objection,  
And you can trust in my protection,  
For you're to me  
Suggestive of green fields and flowers,  
Woodbine and honeysuckle bowers,  
And call to mind delightful hours,  
Of which, when sadness overpowers,  
I think at sea.

## V.

The pantry-door shall ne'er be closed,  
And not a wish shall be opposed,  
If you'll remain.  
The sugar-bowl shall yield its sweets,  
We'll give you some luxurious treats,  
And ope our many potted meats,  
And best champagne.

## VI.

Go, range the cabin through and through,  
And trust me when I swear to you,  
As I'm a sinner,

That, should the steward thwart your wishes,  
I'll break his head with his own dishes,  
And hurl his carcass to the fishes,  
For dinner.

## VII.

You heed me not ; and now you're gone,  
To tempt the mighty deep alone  
And unprotected.

No ! One who hears the raven's cry,  
And marks each sparrow fall and die,  
Watches o'er all with sleepless eye  
And even a simple butterfly  
Is not neglected.

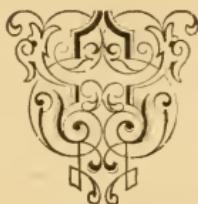
## VIII.

And he the rhymester, who to-day  
Has wooed you in an idle lay,  
Is but like you  
A wanderer across the seas,  
And dreams away these days of ease,  
Entranced with idle fantasies,  
Sweet, though untrue.

## IX.

And though to serious contemplation,  
And calm and pious meditation,  
Too oft a stranger,

Knows that the strong, protecting arm,  
That can subdue the fiercest storm,  
Is thrown around his powerless form,  
    In time of danger.





## AN ANSWER TO AN INVITATION TO DINE

————— “cui corpus porrigitur.”

VIRGIL.

### I.

I'VE just received your invitation  
To a rare banquet, thus you 'clept it,  
And much regret my situation  
Is such that I cannot accept it ;  
No dining out is there for me now,  
My illness is sufficient reason ;  
And could you but look in you'd see now  
That I am laid up for a season.

### II.

In payment for my sins I've caught a  
Distressing cold, and am in bed,  
With napkins wet with rum and water  
Twisted around my aching head.  
It seems as if that nameless Gent.,  
With cloven foot and fable coat,  
On my annihilation bent,  
Had fixed his talons in my throat.

III.

My voice, whose tones, if not o'er pleasant,  
Would doubtless very much delight you,  
Is silent, and if you were present,  
I could not say what now I write you.  
You'll find it not an easy task  
Deciphering this wretched scrawl,  
But he can some indulgence ask  
Who writes in bed against the wall.

IV.

So when you read this lucubration,  
I must request you'll not be critical ;  
Consider that my situation  
Is not by any means poetical.  
A blister that could draw a wagon  
Usurps possession of my chest ;  
It seems as if a fiery dragon  
Had made his home upon my breast.

V.

I'm being now, like gold, refined  
With very fierce and raging fires,  
But not exactly of the kind  
That wit or verse-making inspires.  
With not a thing to eat or drink,  
One can't be very bright or merry,

I'd feel much better now, I think,  
If I could have a glafs of Sherry.

## VI.

I'll own the wine-cup I have drained  
Since I've been stretched upon my back,  
But then the wine the cup contained  
Is known as Wine of Ipecac ;  
And that, my candid mind confesses,  
(A fact I feel convinced that you know,) Does not alleviate distresses  
As much as your delicious "Juno."

## VII.

Just as the clock is striking five  
I'll know you're sitting down to dinner,  
And at that time, if I'm alive,  
I'll pledge you in a draught of Senna ;  
And sigh to lose those scintillations  
From wit that never yet was spiteful,  
And all your brilliant coruscations  
Of fancy that are so delightful.

## VIII.

Please give your guests to understand  
I'd gladly meet them at that hour,  
Were not misfortune's heavy hand  
Upon me with resistless power ;

And though "*in propria persona*"  
To visit them I'll not be able,  
My spirit yet may have the honor  
To come and rap upon the table.

## IX.

When rising from the board the crowd are  
"*Vino ciboque*" quite "*gravatus*,"  
I shall be taking Dover's powder  
And mourning my unhappy "*status*."  
Then let me hope they'll kindly think  
Of him who pens this trifling stanza,  
And filling up their glasses, drink  
Confusion to the Influenza !





## A CHARCOAL SKETCH.

“ Perhaps, and then again perhaps not.”

*Familiar Saying.*

I MEET a fellow often in my way,  
Urging a horse and wagon through the streets,  
And shouting “ Charcoal ! ” to each one he  
meets ;  
I passed him in the thoroughfare to-day  
But did not ridicule his features grim,—  
His ragged coat, and hat without a brim.  
Thought I, “ That fellow in those shabby clothes,  
Driving all day his shapeless horse and cart,  
Owes nothing to the tailor or his art,  
Like many of our gallant city beaux ;  
And would that all of us, like him, could say,  
Each night, that our pursuits throughout the day  
Had left no tarnish harder to erase  
Than what he has upon his hands and face !  
There’s not a spot of black upon his heart,  
It’s all upon his face and hands and cart,

And he may stand a better chance to go  
To Heaven than I, or many that I know."

But this was Fancy's work, and we,  
Though better dressed, perchance, are just as good  
as he.





## THE JILTED KNIGHT.

A BALLAD.

### I.

A GALLANT knight and lady bright,  
(They termed them thus of yore,)  
Beneath a tree, love, constancy,  
And truth forever swore.

### II.

“ My dearest love ! the Heavens above  
Record the vows we’ve made ;  
With many a knight I go to fight  
Upon a great crusade ;

### III.

’Tis honor calls me from my halls  
And far, my love, from thee,  
With my good sword, from Paynim horde  
The Holy Land to free.

## IV.

It rends my heart from thee to part,  
But love must yield to duty ;  
For valor, Fame shall spread my name  
As far as thine for beauty.

## V.

And though, alas ! a twelvemonth pâs,  
My truth is pledged forever,—  
You'll not forget our souls have met ? ”  
The lady answered, “ Never.”

## VI.

One long, last sip of her sweet lip —  
One pressure of the hand —  
The knight bestrode his steed and rode  
Towards the Holy Land.

## VII.

The lady sighed and sobbed and cried  
To see him ride away ;  
In wretched plight she passed that night  
And part of the next day.

## VIII.

But ere the sun its course had run  
Another knight came by, —

She smoothed each tress, arranged her dress,  
And wiped her tearful eye.

## IX.

This knight he swore, though ne'er before  
He'd set his eyes upon her,  
That he'd prefer to live for her  
Than die for empty honor.

## X.

She ceased her sighs, and raised her eyes  
That late with tears had glistened,  
And could but hear those vows sincere,—  
Because in sooth she listened.

## XI.

Perchance she thought, as life was short,  
One lover near at hand  
Was worth at least ten in the East,—  
Far in the Holy Land.

## XII.

For just suppose that Paynim foes  
Should slay that absent lover,—  
Slight good 'twould do that she'd been true,  
When Love's sweet dream was over.

## XIII.

As years advance, less grows their chance  
To captivate mankind :  
This fact, they say, will often sway  
A lovely woman's mind.

## XIV.

A bitter truth it is, that youth  
And beauty do not tarry,  
So ere they go, all maidens know  
'Tis better that they marry.

## XV.

One ne'er would end did he pretend  
To state how some will use  
Pure logic's art, their want of heart  
And falseness to excuse.

## XVI.

O'er meadow, dale, and hill and vale  
The bridal bells rang out,  
While one true knight in bloody fight  
Was putting scores to rout.

## XVII.

'Neath burning sun brave deeds were done,  
Through love of her and glory,—

That her dear name by his great fame  
Might live in song and story.

## XVIII.

Her scarf he wore his breast before,—  
Upon his helm her glove,—  
Some Poet sings, what foolish things  
Wise men will do for love.

## XIX.

Where lances gleamed and banners streamed  
And life-blood ebbed away,  
Oh, would that knight had lost the fight  
And fallen in the fray !

## XX.

Thrice happy he right peacefully  
To sleep among the dead,  
Than live to find in womankind  
His faith forever fled.

## MORAL.

## XXI.

Now should you be by Love's decree  
Possessor of a treasure,  
Whose loss would make you loth to take  
In life the slightest pleasure,

## XXII.

There's one great rule, and he's a fool  
Whoever dares discard it : —  
Go not afar to scenes of war,  
But stay at home and guard it.

## XXIII.

Scorn confidence, — let common sense  
Alone be your adviser,  
Or else some morn you'll wake forlorn,  
A fadder man, and wiser.





## ROMEO MONTAGUE TO JULIET CAPULET.

### I.

DEAR JULIET, come down from your lattice so high,  
I've no ladder with which I can reach you ;  
There's no dew on the grass and the walks are quite  
dry,  
So, dearest, descend, I beseech you !  
Love-making you'll find very nice, if you'll try,  
And I'm just the person to teach you.

### II.

I have come over roads very stony and rough,  
And through perils severe that beset me,  
Nor tarried to ask of each Capulet gruff  
If to love you he's willing to let me ;  
I'd have proved myself made of most obstinate stuff  
To each and to all, had they met me.

### III.

At a very great risk to my clothes and my neck,  
I have clambered right over the wall,  
And the broken glass-bottles its summit that deck  
Did not scare or restrain me at all, —

Though I knew I would be a most terrible wreck,  
If by chance I should happen to fall.

## IV.

Nor fear I the sword of your big, burly brother,  
Who, perhaps, now is hovering nigh,  
But I'll dare every danger each night for another  
Bright glance from your dark rolling eye.  
It's no easy thing, let me tell you, to smother  
The flame that is lighted on high !

## V.

He who ne'er has been wounded may well jest at  
scars,  
And to overcome peril essay,  
Broken bottles set endwise, nor locks, bolts, and bars,  
Can keep a true lover away ;  
Then by the soft light of the innocent stars,  
List to all the sweet things I've to say.

## VI.

It seems you object to my family name,—  
I would I'd my visiting card ;  
For although for my name 'tis not I who's to blame,  
Yet I'd tear in ten pieces the word ;  
But for such a slight cause to extinguish Love's flame  
Would truly be vastly absurd.

## VII.

The flower we fancy so much as a rose  
 Would assuredly seem just as sweet,  
 And be as agreeable to eyes and to nose  
 If we called it a carrot or beet,  
 And I as John Smith or Tom Brown, I suppose,  
 Would appear just as well in the street.

## VIII.

So in order no more to be under a ban,  
 And denied an access to your door,  
 I'll have my name changed just as soon as I can,  
 Nor be Romeo Montague more ;  
 To think aught a sacrifice — I'm not the man —  
 That is done for the girl I adore.

## IX.

Then, Juliet, descend from that balcony high,  
 I've a sermon on Love that I'll preach you, —  
 We'll take a nice walk 'round the garden so dry, —  
 So, dearest, come down, I beseech you ;  
 Love-making, I think, you will like if you try,  
 And I know 'twill be pleasant to teach you.



## THE REASON WHY.

### I.

HER eye was like the violet  
When morning dews are on it,  
Her cheek competed with the rose  
She wore in her Spring bonnet,  
Her lips were cherries in the sun  
Just ripening on the stem,  
Her teeth were like the glistening pearls  
On royal diadem.

### II.

Her figure was superb,— her grace  
Seemed really superhuman,  
For Nature sometimes does her best  
To beautify a Woman ;  
In sooth she was a lovely thing  
For Memory to recall,  
And yet he wooed her not — because  
Her dividends were small.



## TO MY UMBRELLA.

### I.

MY well-tried friend, we've been together  
Through many a change of wind and weather  
Three years and more ;  
While strolling down the London Strand,  
To satisfy a shower's demand  
And save my clothes, I made a stand  
At what appeared a " Hat, cap, and  
Umbrella store."

### II.

And then and there I purchased you,  
The best of all that were on view,  
For one pound one,  
And never since have felt regret  
For what I paid ; you're worth it yet,  
And I confess that getting wet  
Affords no fun.

### III.

While looking at you through the smoke  
(That now enshrouds me like a cloak)  
Of my cigar,

My Fancy, for the humor's sake,  
A backward range essayes to take,  
And speak of what has helped to make  
    You what you are.

## IV.

Some tree that raised its branches high  
As if to paint the azure sky,  
    Was forced to fall,  
And from a portion of its wood,  
Your staff was made, so strong and good  
That many a fearful gale has stood  
    Nor cracked at all.

## V.

From the deep bosom of the earth,  
Where they experience quite a dearth  
    Of light and air,  
The miner with his pick and spade,  
Has dug the ore from which were made  
    The tips you wear.

## VI.

A monster who affects the sea  
Has been prevailed upon to be  
    Harpooned 'till dead.  
And from his great and mighty jaw

A substance, miscalled bone, they tore,  
And fashioned it with knife and saw  
Into some dozen rods or more  
That you might spread.

## VII.

Another monster, who beguiled  
The time by roaming India's wild  
Near Coromandel,  
While gambolling upon the plain,  
Despite, and for, his teeth was slain  
That you for use, in case of rain,  
Might have a handle.

## VIII.

Your filken cover,—to be brief,—  
Was once a simple mulberry-leaf  
On mulberry-tree,  
And now by processes I'll not  
Mention, because I can't, is what  
I plainly see.

## IX.

Many a shower you have braved,  
And many a coat and hat you've saved,—  
Protecting thing!  
All know there are not many ways  
In which a rhymester ever pays

For benefits conferred, — his lays  
Are sometimes all that he can raise,  
So rest contented if your praise  
I briefly sing.

## x.

I've found you through all change the same, —  
You've ne'er deserved that hateful name,  
Fair-weather friend ;  
Where'er I've been, on land or sea,  
By day or night, you've stood by me  
When storms arose, right gallantly,  
Until the end.

## xi.

I prize you, though you have no beauty,  
For this, that you have done your duty  
As if you knew it.  
Now calm and quietly you stand  
In reach of my extended hand,  
Ready, when such is my command,  
Again to do it.

## xii.

When in a proper frame of mind  
There's nought in which one cannot find  
Instructive teaching,  
That will improve him, if he'll lay it

Close to his heart, and will obey it,  
As much, with all respect I say it,  
As pulpit preaching.

## XIII.

I'll moralize, for soon or late,  
Such is the stern decree of Fate,  
An angel comes  
With power to summon us away,  
No choice have we to go or stay,  
But that sad word, Farewell, must say  
To our dear homes.

## XIV.

When to my life he puts the bound,  
In one respect would I be found  
Not unlike thee.  
Ere yet by Death my limbs are chilled,  
On this alone my hopes I build,  
That when my beating heart is stilled  
I may be thought to have fulfilled  
My destiny.



## OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES.

### NO. I.

SAID James to John, “ Pray tell me, Sir,  
Why is it that the Devil,  
In spite of all his naughtiness,  
Can never be uncivil ? ”

Then John replied, “ The answer’s plain  
To any mind that’s bright,—  
The *Imp o’ Darkness* ne’er can be  
Considered *Imp o’ Light.*”

### NO. II.

My Christian friend, I’ve heard it said  
‘The highly valued rarity,—  
A perfect wife,— with Satan has  
One point of similarity ;  
For, while in sleep the Husband-man  
Forgets his worldly cares,  
She, to her credit be it said,  
Then comes and *sews the tears.*

## NO. III.

Old Paterfamilias called to his side  
Little Tommy, his wonderful son,  
And inquired, " How differs a hen with two wings  
From a hen that possesses but one ? "  
Then Tommy replied, for the lad in the field  
Of wit held extensive dominion,  
" The distinction is small, for there seems but to be  
A slight difference, Sir, of *a pinion*."

## NO. IV.

Were you ever in Cork, Sir ? was Foote asked one day ;  
And the Actor replied in his humorous way,  
That though in most cities of note he had been  
Yet of *Cork* 'twas *the drawings* alone that he'd seen.

## NO. V.

Said Johnson, this galvanized goblet of lead  
Shall be his who can soonest assemble  
His wits, and say when can a candle be said  
A tombstone at all to resemble.

Then Jackson replied, with successful endeavor,  
Extending his hand for the cup,  
That a candle resembles a tombstone whenever  
'Tis for any late husband set up.

## NO. VI.

'The Pilgrim o'er a desert wild  
Should ne'er let want confound him,  
For he at any time can eat  
The *sand which is* around him.  
It might seem odd that he could find  
Such palatable fare,  
Did not we know the sons of *Ham*  
Were *bred and mustered* there.

## NO. VII.

Jane fears to walk 'mid flowers in Spring,  
Though each one fragrance distils,  
Because her nerves are weak, and all  
The plants are *shooting pistils*.

## NO. VIII.

In a rage to the office of Counsellor B.  
Rushed a gallant militia commander  
To learn whether "Jackass," as oft he was called,  
Was a ground for an action of slander ;  
The lawyer replied, "In some cases the term,  
If not slanderous, at least is pseudonymous,  
But in yours, (and for this I shall make you no  
charge,) I consider it merely synonymous.

## NO. IX.

Blank's Poems fell on Julia's head,  
Not long she bore the pain ; —  
The Jury found she died of milk  
And water on the brain.

## NO. X.

I put my pen to this scrap of paper  
To ask if you comprehend the relation  
The entry-mat bears to the outside scraper ?  
If you do, please reply without hesitation ;  
But you don't, for your brain works exceedingly slow,  
And you needn't smile in that imbecile way  
When I say, *a step farther* ; for you didn't know,  
And that isn't what you were just going to say.

## NO. XI.

At church, Joe says, his manly heart  
With true devotion swells ;  
Disproving that — as some assert —  
He's led there by *the Belles* ;  
While Jane, the happiest of coquettes,  
Whose eye no sorrow dims,  
Most piously employs her time  
In looking for *the Hims*.

## NO. XII.

When Sambo, with a bull behind,  
    Of life and limb in danger,  
Shuns any close acquaintance with  
    The rude unpleasant stranger,  
No doubt, like Patriots of old,  
    Should fear still leave him sense,  
He'd give, if nought for tribute, yet  
    His “ millions for *de fence*. ”

## NO. XIII.

“ Are there not too many *paffages*  
    In Plagiary’s Play ? ”  
“ Yes, so many that the meaning  
    Has wholly lost its way.”

## NO. XIV.

The Philosopher who seeks  
    The fabled stone in vain,  
Is like old Father Neptune,  
    The Monarch of the Main ;  
For no person in his sences  
    The conclusion can resist,  
When I say, *he is a seeking*  
    *What never did exist.*

## NO. XV.

The reason why a bear should seek  
A dry-goods shop seems puzzling,  
And so I'll state that there he'd want  
Just nothing else but *muzzling*.

## NO. XVI.

Byron asked Moore, "In Love wherein  
Aught of resemblance lies  
To the potato?" "Why!" said Moore,  
"They both *shoot from the eyes*."  
"That answer's good," rejoined my Lord,  
In the general laughter sharing,  
"But the likeness that I fancied, was,  
They both *decrease by paring*."

## NO. XVII.

'Tis not caprice that moves the duck,  
Throughout all times and seasons,  
To disappear beneath the wave,  
For it has *divers* reasons ;  
And its return to light and air  
Caprice does not direct,—  
The reasons for this second move  
Are *sundry*, I suspect.

## NO. XVIII.

When Johnson for a time dissolved  
The conjugal relation,  
He told his wife he'd send her funds,  
Which was a consolation ;  
But she at last was forced to say,  
As by the months went flitting  
And nothing came, "Great kindness this,—  
'Tis truly *unremitting*."

## NO. XIX.

Luck varies with the men who hunt  
For gold, as I'll explain :  
Some find the ore *in creases*,  
While others seek *in vein*.

## NO. XX.

• Knowest thou, whene'er the joyless mind  
Seems most distraught with grief,  
Where sympathy the heart can find,  
And genuine relief ?  
If not, then Reader, learn from me,  
Howe'er the cafes vary,  
You'll find *Relief* and *Sympathy*  
In every Dictionary.

## NO. XXI.

Once, at a feast, when jokes flew 'round  
Much thicker than the flies,  
The host had doubts if he should carve  
The mutton *saddlewise*,  
And therefore turned to Theodore Hook,  
The celebrated Wit,  
Who answered, “*Bridlewise*, for in  
My mouth will be a *bit*.”

## NO. XXII.

Forth from the Opera I saw a wag,  
Well known to Fame in all his glory come,  
And as he stepped upon the icy flag  
He fell with force enough to strike him dumb,  
And rolling over, landed in the gutter ;  
I sprang to save,—but only caught his hat,—  
And as he rose I thought I heard him mutter,  
“One must *C sharp* if he would not *B flat*.”

## NO. XXIII.

## QUESTION.

Fair Joan of Arc, they say, was not  
Sword, lance or pike afraid of ;  
Can any person tell me what  
So brave a girl was made of ?

## ANSWER.

The Heroine, whose triumphant blade  
Made Bedford's soldiers dance,  
If History tells the truth, was Maid  
Of Orleans, in France.





## SONNETS.

---

LIKE an indulgent mother, Nature still  
Awaits her prodigal's return ; — nor blame  
Nor scorn has she, but ever smiles the same  
And yields her bounties to each one who will ;  
Her generous arms she opes to him who worn  
With toil and sorrow, hopeless and forlorn,  
Jaded and fainting with the unceasing strife  
And battle with the world, would seek for rest, —  
Enfolds him like an infant to her breast  
And reads him lessons of a purer life.  
Here, with this streamlet rippling at my feet,  
Far from the roar and turmoil of the town,  
I feel the rapture of her presence sweet,  
Nor would resign it for an Emperor's crown.

As some poor captive, prisoned and enchain'd,  
Who long in vain has struggled to be free,  
Will learn to deem his lot by Heaven ordain'd  
And yield to what he thought a stern decree,  
So I, rebellious once, now can but bless  
The fate that makes me so entirely thine,  
To love and serve thee is my happiness ; —  
Who would be free where bondage is divine !  
In joy and grief, in pleasure and in pain,  
Nearest and dearest to thy heart I've stood ;  
'Tis mockery to say, " Be free once more,"  
My arm is powerless to ope the door  
Would lead me forth ; — so long I've worn thy chain  
I could not break it, Dearest, if I would.



WITHOUT, the tempest rages, and the winds  
Howl like unearthly spirits through the street,  
My casements shake in concert with the blinds,  
And all the panes are crusted o'er with sleet ;  
But here within is comfort and repose,  
The cheerful logs are blazing on my hearth,—  
Of favorite books in rows succeeding rows,  
That stand at my command, there is no dearth ;  
These are the valued friends with whom I live,—  
Friends who assume no privilege to say  
Unwelcome truths, or mark my faults, or give  
Unasked advice,—right pleasant friends are they.  
With them,—this pipe,—that flask of Rhenish  
wine,—  
Though tempests rage,— beatitude is mine.



I PINE and languish with desire to know  
Something of this unquiet heart of mine,  
The mystery of its life, and where shall flow  
In future time this essence so divine,—  
Soul, Spirit, Mind, Intelligence, or Love,  
Or whatsoe'er,— that raises me above  
The brutes that wholly die ; and whence arose  
The spark that lighted in my heart this fire.  
As Life is hastening on, more fiercely glows  
Within me this unsatisfied desire  
Heaven's book of knowledge in my hands to grasp  
And all the bonds of Ignorance unclasp ;  
But I must wait God's time,— then each shall  
know  
Whence his life came and whither it shall go.



IN genial sunshine and in stormy weather  
O'er pleasant slopes and through some rugged ways,  
E'en from the earliest of our boyhood's days,  
We two have walked Life's varied path together,  
And shall we now, in spite of what hath been  
Through all these years, ignore the well-knit band  
Of fellowship? Aloof shall we two stand  
While wider grows the gulf that yawns between,  
Until its hollow jaws shall ope so wide  
That all endeavor will be vain to cross,—  
While we regret, too late, each other's loss,—  
And all for cherishing a foolish pride?  
No. Not if one atoning word of mine  
Sent from my heart hath power to meet with thine.



As some light bark upon a summer sea  
Holding its homeward course, with hope elate  
And joy triumphant, speeding gallantly,  
Unconscious of its sad impending fate,  
Is suddenly by Jove's dread lightning riven,  
Then, wrecked and shattered, by the tempest driven ;  
So my confiding heart, that day by day  
Seemed hastening to the haven of its rest  
Where Care and Sorrow ne'er should find their way,  
But Love and Happiness would build their nest,  
Was stricken by a fatal blow, and hurled  
Again upon a cold and heartless world ;  
Hope, as she fled me, whispered all was lost,  
And now my heart is wrecked and tempest-tost.



THERE is an Art no penalties engird,  
Of power transcendent,— ever in our reach,—  
And our own hearts its daily need can teach ;  
No laws restrict its use,— to all 'tis free  
As Heaven's great gift of air ; the vulgar herd  
Have equal rights with Kings ; and yet 'tis strange,  
Knowing its limitless extent of range,  
So few employ its magic ministry.  
Its sway o'er young and old no voice can speak,—  
It hath a charm to change the wayward mood  
Of friends and lovers,— to sustain the weak,—  
To tame the brutal,— to restrain the rude,—  
To win the wandering, and to soothe distress.  
'Tis Love's own graceful Art of Gentleness.



THE knell is tolled of all my joyous dreams  
Of tranquil happiness, my Love, with thee.  
And all the Future, once so brilliant, teems  
With nought but loneliness and misery ;  
For Hope lies buried, — funeral tapers burn  
Where Hymen's torch should throw its gladdening  
beams.

Dark shadows greet me wheresoe'er I turn,  
And seem to mock me with a fiendish glee, —  
No resignation can my spirit learn, —  
No consolation can Time bring to me ; —  
A barren spot whereon no sunshine gleams, —  
A wreck abandoned on a stormy sea, —  
A withered garland on sepulchral urn, —  
Are what my heart is like, apart from thee.



ADVICE is wasted both by Sage and Preacher  
Because Experience ever keeps the school  
Wherein all learn, — the wise man and the fool ;  
Whate'er men say, she is the only teacher,  
Her tasks are hard, — her lessons, slowly learned,  
Are ne'er forgotten ; deeply are they burned  
Into the very soul. Ah, yes ! and when  
In later years our self-conceit departs,  
And, if at all, true wisdom comes to men,  
A consciousness of folly fills our hearts ;  
The mists that shroud our vision break away  
And then to our regret we clearly see  
What vain illusions lured our steps astray ; —  
How false the Gods to which we bent the knee.



Is there no balm in Gilead for the mood  
Wherein I sit in misery, and feel  
Anew the agony Time will not heal ?  
In hopelessness, despair, and grief I brood,  
My heart consuming in this solitude,  
Groping in darkness, — seeking but in vain  
For comfort to this mourning soul of mine ;  
Hath Friendship's gentle craft no anodyne  
To soothe the trouble of an o'erwrought brain ?  
Alas ! No ministry of human art, —  
Whate'er its mission in this world of pain, —  
Can cure the desolation of the heart ;  
But Faith, that bids us never to despise,  
Can rend the gloom and show the Heaven beyond.



IN this delicious silence so profound  
Of Night's most halcyon hour, as I lie  
Stretched on the turf beneath a gorgeous sky  
While all the world is hushed, am I not crowned  
With Heaven's divinest gift,— a joyous heart ?  
All passions cease,— no evil thought can mar  
The glory shed on me by moon and star,—  
The world's vexations one by one depart,  
The wounds of daily suffering are healed,—  
Long-cherished hatreds, and all sense of wrong  
Held in my inmost soul I freely yield ;—  
For perfect Love, e'en such as Poet's song  
Hath never told, so fills this heart of mine,  
I know the Presence near me is Divine.



BEFORE my voice is silent with the dead,  
Would I might breathe one grand and noble lay  
That,—sung beside the dying sufferer's bed,—  
Would soothe the fainting soul and aching head,—  
Teach my sad brethren on their onward way  
To struggle manfully from day to day,—  
Inspire a firmer trustfulness,—relieve  
The bitter agony of those who grieve,—  
Rouse the despairing,—and make cold hearts beat  
With a sublime emotion. I would give  
All of this life in human hearts to live.  
Grant me to sing that song divinely sweet,  
Then 'neath the daisies joyfully I'll lie  
For I shall know I cannot wholly die.



## L'ENVOI.

### TO THE READER.

My wish is granted, if the passing hour  
That thou hast given to these, — my smiles and  
tears, —

Should have by happy chance the magic power  
As friends to leave us for the coming years ;  
It may be so, if aught from heart of mine  
Hath touched a chord that vibrated in thine.



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